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House of Representatives

The House met at 12 noon and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore [Mr. HOBSON].

DESIGNATION OF THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
June 4, 1997.

I hereby designate the Honorable DAVID L. HOBSON to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

NEWT GINGRICH,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Rev. James David Ford, D.D., offered the following prayer:

As we observe our communities and world, O God, we see all the contrasts that reflect the good and the profane, the generous and the outrageous, the acts of charity and the feelings of enmity. We pray, gracious God, that whatever our situation, whatever our responsibility, whatever our opportunity, we will rely on Your providence to show us the way of mercy and of justice. As we cannot control all the events that touch our lives, yet we can rely on those gifts of grace that You freely give to us, those blessings that sustain us and give us hope for each new day. This is our earnest prayer. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentlewoman from the Virgin Islands [Ms. CHRISTIAN-GREEN] come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Ms. CHRISTIAN-GREEN led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

A COMMONSENSE PROPOSAL

(Mr. BALLENGER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BALLENGER. Mr. Speaker, during the 104th Congress, after the conflict over the Balanced Budget Act of 1995, the President came down to this very Chamber to plead, to beg, that we never, never, ever shut down the Government again.

Well, apparently there has been another change of heart over at the White House. Apparently the White House actually sees value in shutting down the Government. They believe this so passionately that they are willing to block disaster relief for flood victims in the Dakotas and Minnesota.

The Gekas-Wynn provision would maintain 100 percent of 1997 funding levels for the Government programs in the event that the President and Congress could not agree on appropriations bills.

But somehow, incredibly, the President is rejecting this commonsense proposal. Why? Would the President really block disaster funding in order to shut down the Government? Apparently the answer to that question is yes.

PETITIONS AGAINST ANTI-IMMIGRANT WELFARE LAW

(Mr. GUTIERREZ asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. GUTIERREZ. Mr. Speaker, some distinguished visitors are seated in the House gallery today. More than 100 Jews from the former Soviet Union, many of whom helped fight with America against fascism in the 1940's and crushed communism in the 1990's.

It is an honor to welcome them here and to speak on their behalf.

In addition to those 100 people, I also speak on behalf of 100,000 other Americans who are not here with us today but whose names are here on these petitions.

Yes, 100,000 Americans have signed these petitions to protest the harsh punitive welfare law that will exact a terrible toll on legal immigrants, the elderly, the disabled, and vulnerable immigrants. There are 100,000 people calling on Congress and the White House to restore benefits to legal immigrants, to restore fairness to the welfare debate, to restore compassion to our Nation's policy, and to restore America's heritage as a nation that welcomes and protects legal immigrants who seek a better life and seek to make America a better place. These are 100,000 Americans who will continue to fight this Congress and the White House until justice is done.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair reminds the gentleman not to refer to persons in the gallery.

NUCLEAR WASTE DISPOSAL

(Mr. GIBBONS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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